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fusion, and terminate in debasement of character. K.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

IN his philosophical essays, Dugald Stewart shows himself a zealous antagonist to the theory of Hartley, yet his own performance appears to be a perpetual practical application of that very theory. It illustrates as it were the *ubiquity* of the associating principle, in all the philosophy of mind, and in all the effects of experience. Indeed, as has been well remarked by Horne Tooke, philosophers have taken away from experience the credit of our instruction, for want of perceiving how early she begins her lessons.

In like manner, Professor Stewart, finds fault with this same Horne Tooke, for recurring in his explanation of terms, to the literal, and primitive sense of the roots from whence they sprung, elucidating, by this means with a glance of his original genius, the gradual process of analogical phraseology, by which, metaphysical terms, that were seemingly divested of their *primary* import, are again resolved into the circumstances, which originally suggested them; and thus, terms, the most refined and abstracted, are proved to have been at first, borrowed from some object of *external perception*. Hence the Etymologist will often correct the errors of the Metaphysician.

Yet, notwithstanding his rejection of Mr. Tooke's most ingenious hypothesis; Mr. Stewart in his essay on *SUBLIMITY*, seems to have implicitly adopted it, though he is willing, with the *esprit de corps* common to all Scotch authors, to make Lord Kames the original source from whence he drew his theory.

Lord Kames, says he, has observed "that, generally speaking, the figurative sense of a word is derived from its proper sense," and then, in illustration of this remark, the Professor proceeds in tracing the various metaphorical or transitive meanings of the term *sublime*, to its literal and primary sense, as synonymous with *height* or *altitude*.

Whether Mr. Tooke's *political* principles have had any influence in exasperating the repugnance which the Scotch philosophers have expressed with respect to his etymological doctrine, it is not easy to say; but I am disposed to believe, that a man who made use of such a sentence as the following, stands but little chance of ever receiving a warm compliment from the Edinburgh Reviewers.—"But I do acknowledge, and I make it my boast, that upon all great public questions, neither friends, nor foes; nor life, nor death; nor thunder, nor lightning shall ever make me give way, the breadth of one hair." This was indeed a declaration sufficient to cause the broadest stare throughout the Scottish land, and to fix all its poets, its philosophers, and its patriots, in mute astonishment.

I feel the highest or deepest respect for the inhabitants of Scotland *personally*, for their many estimable qualities, for their habits of industry and œconomy, their tranquil and indefatigable ambition; their hard though polished manners; their tenaciousness of purpose; their general education; and even their nationality, which can, however, be deemed but a bastard patriotism. *Personally*, they are to be respected; as a public they are nothing, and with respect to public spirit, or the soul of a country, it is my unalterable opinion, that it was lost for ever at that fatal era, when a historian of their own nation said that

no sum was *too little* for purchasing the votes of the Scottish members.

Although it be certain that the period of time between the revolution, and the passing of the act of union produced men of eminent talents; yet it is some compensation, and some consolation if in consequence of that act so destructive of public spirit in Scotland, literature has been more successfully cultivated, and learned men become more abundant. It is some compensation that they can lay claim to such an author as Dugald Stewart, though it is much to be doubted whether they ever will have to boast of such a man as Horne Tooke. Lord Erskine will by many be deemed a veteran patriot, but some who more narrowly watch the difference between the exits and entrances of men will only call him a *veterinary* patriot. Fletcher of Saltoun appears to me the last of the Scottish patriots, as Marcus Brutus, was called by Cremutius Cordus (who suffered death in consequence of this *libel* on the government)—the last of the Romans. It was said of Fletcher that he would lose his life, readily, to preserve his country, and would not do a base action to save it. He was a learned, gallant, honest, and every way well accomplished gentleman, and if ever a man proposes to serve and merit well of his country, let him place the courage, zeal, and constancy of this man before him, and think himself sufficiently applauded and rewarded, if he obtained the character of being like Andrew Fletcher, of Saltoun.

With respect to Mr. Stewart's reference of the different cases of the sublime to the literal acceptance of the word, meaning *height* or *altitude*, I think it a beautiful illustration of Horne Tooke's philosophical etymology. Yet the *descent* of Eneas, and

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of Ulysses into the *infernal* regions is one of the most sublime passages in the *Eneid*, and the *Odyssey*; and an *earth-quake* is really, and descriptively the sublimest occurrence which can happen to mortals, though it takes place *beneath our feet*.

But my purpose in writing, at present, was merely to adduce *one* instance of a nature scarcely referable to this literal acceptance of the term, sublime, even as the common basis of collateral associations. Perhaps the circumstance most impressively sublime, in the history of modern literature, is the impenetrable concealment, the shadows, cloud, and darkness which hang around the real author of the Letters of JUNIUS. "If I be a vain man, my vanity lies within a narrow circle. I am the depositary of my own secret, AND IT SHALL PERISH WITH ME." Such is the sentence, which, taken with all its concomitant circumstances, appears to me the most sublime in modern writ, yet without any supposable connexion with the literal import of that word.

There is, generally, one prominent quality which characterizes the style, as it often does the individual, and we can readily distinguish both in orators, and in authors, different varieties of this very same character. Thus in the *exuberance of words* common to the three, how great is the difference, and how easy the distinction between the majestic and fertilizing flow of Ciceronian diction, the ostentatious, yet elegant amplification of Pitt, and the copious barrenness of C—t—h. Thus too in the common quality of *brilliant fancy*, we can easily discriminate the antithetical style of Grattan from the efflorescent of Burke.

Far am I from confining the merits of the former, as Flood once did, to the powers of *fancy*, at a
P p

time too, when he himself must have felt, what all Ireland *then* felt, and gloried in feeling that with those powers, that orator combined not only the principles but the *flame* of public virtue, and hence it was that all Ireland admired, and loved him. "When those principles," says an eminent genius, "are in the *head* alone, they are notions, principles from which to reason, and they serve oftener to judge of the conduct of others, than to influence our own. But when they are in the *heart* too, they become sentiments, principles of action, and they unite the powers of the whole man, in pursuit of every laudable purpose."

Thus, again, in the common quality of the *SUBLIME*, we may distinguish between the concentrated energy of Tacitus, the opulent and ornate diction of Gibbon, and the inimitable stile of JUNIUS; a stile, polished, indeed so highly by art, as serves most effectually to collect and condense the rays of his genius; a rare combination of most vigorous intellect, with most exquisite taste; contemptuous of figurative language, and yet endowed "with that delicate perception of the scarcely discernible boundary which separates ornament from exuberance, and elegance from affectation;" severe even to malignity*, and gifted with a sword of sarcasm so tempered, that neither keen nor solid might resist

* Such and so great indeed is this malignity, that it may be said to insinuate somewhat of the same disposition into the reader, who, for a moment, feels himself inclined to suspect that this severe man, was in the confidence of the very ministry, whom he deemed it a duty to expose; that he compounded with his private and personal, for the sacrifice of his public and political conscience; and that had he ever made himself known, his real name would have sunk in perishable infamy, while in his assumed one, he has become immortal.

its edge; yet, with all this characteristic sublimity in the whole course of his letters, the master stroke, the crowning act of the practical sublime still remained. It was accomplished—in the impenetrable concealment of the author, mocking alike the sagacity of political spies and the futile investigations of literary curiosity; and superior not only to the temptations of popular fame while in life, but even to posthumous glory. There never has been, and relying as I do, on the sentence above cited, I am disposed to believe there never will be a revelation of this sublime mystery, hitherto unexampled in the history of literature. Their monuments remain, but the names of him who built the greatest of the Pyramids and of him who polished the periods of Junius are alike unknown.

"The other shape,
If shape it might be called, that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance, might be called that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell,
AND SHOOK A DREADFUL DART.—

I am, Sir, yours,
A. P.

For the *Belfast Monthly Magazine*.

CHARTER OF CARRICKFERGUS.

(Continued from page 205)

AND furthermore, of our special grace, we will, and by these presents for us, our heirs, and successors, grant unto the said mayor, sheriffs, burgesses, and commonalty of our town of Knockfergus aforesaid, and to their successors, that they, and their successors for ever, decide and distinguish themselves into divers guilds and fraternities, according to their conditions, crafts,